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foreward

This short story is based off of a card game. If you guess it first, great job! You'll get a shoutout on my profile for three days.

POKER FACE is a story written by me, and it is based off of the book series written by Erin Hunter. Warrior Cats belongs to Erin Hunter solely, but the characters mentioned in this book belong to me, as well as the idea.

Gorsestar's twisted mind has set a game to play.

And not everyone will make it out alive.

There will be a fair amount of death in this story. You have been warned.

one

hey. my name is yewstep. i live in gladeclan.

two

i have been drafted in finder. its easy to understand.

there are ten cats in play. three killers, two healers, a finder, and four innocents. there is a final cat, and this final cat is the announcer.

at the beginning of the game, all the cats are asleep, and the announcer tells the killers to awaken. then, the killers choose someone they will kill the following day.

then the killers go back to sleep. next, the healers wake up. the announcer asks them who they would save if one was at death's door. if the cat that was chosen to die is saved by the doctors, that cat will not die.

then the healers return to sleep. lastly, the finder awakens. the finder chooses someone they think is a killer. the announcer tells the remaining cats who has been accused.

the next morning, all the cats meet up to discuss what has happened the previous night. then, the announcer asks if anyone to seconds the finder's choice of the suspected killer. if at least two cats agree, the suspected cat is killed.

after the cat has been killed, the announcer tells everyone if that cat was innocent or not. after the council, the cat the killers decided to kill is attacked by all three killers at once. the cycle continues until there are either one killer left, or all the innocents, doctors, and finder are outnumbered by killers.

i am the finder.

three

the first round is tomorrow. everyone is preparing. gorsestar is very excited. he loves watching finder.

the announcer this year is leafberry. he is very kind, and experienced with herbs.

four

i'm scared.

five

my sister, lionpelt, is excited. she's gladeclan's deputy. everyone else is scared. my brother, minktooth, is nervous to see what happens.

i want to find out who the other cats playing are, but we all have to stay quiet.

six

i don't sleep well at all that night.

the game is starting now. i don't have a clue who i'm going to accuse. everyone is placed in a huge hollow tree that looks like a cave. i smell heatherbranch, boulderfur, and vixentail first. then magnoliawhisker, and after her, coyotecry. harestep, lilactail, and fishfoot are next. lastly, i scent seedheart. any of these cats could be a killer.

gorsestar is watching. he takes away the accused and murders them.

seven

leafberry calls out from the middle of the circle of cats. "killers, awaken."

i sit in darkness, my eyes squeezed shut. if we're caught cheating, nothing good will happen.

eight

"who would you like to kill?" leafberry asks. i don't hear anything, nothing that will give me a clue as to who I would think is a killer.

"healers, awaken."

nine

"who will you save?"

i hear nothing.

"healers, go back to sleep. finder, awaken."

ten

i open my eyes. i see magnoliawhisker and vixentail next to me, and the other cats around me.

"finder, who do you think is a killer?"

having nothing to go off of, i point my tail at fishfoot. he has been accused, now. i hope he isn't innocent.

"finder, return to sleep. everyone, wake up."

i look around as everyone else's eyes open.

eleven

time for everyone to find out who has been accused.

"fishfoot has been accused of murder. any cat second that thought?"

i see fishfoot's eyes widen in shock and perhaps even hurt. i watch as every cat looks around, and they all say, in total unison, "i agree."

fishfoot cries out as he is dragged away by gorsestar.

twelve

"fishfoot was innocent. one point for the killers. everyone, take a small break. the killers will claim their victim."

i stand up shakily and exit the den. i don't want to be killed.

thirteen

i feel guilt wash over me. fishfoot was innocent. i helped kill an innocent cat. i continue walking around hopelessly. i see gorsestar walking past me.

fourteen

there is blood on his claws.

fifteen

i start to shake. fishfoot is really dead.

i then hear a loud scream. the killers have taken another life.

sixteen

i recognize harepelt's voice as he yells, "please don't kill me!"

seventeen

leafberry calls everyone back to the tree. "round one is over. fishfoot and harepelt have been killed. there are three killers left, and three innocents."

that means harepelt wasn't a bystander. he had to have been a healer.

eighteen

we are placed in multiple dens, away from the rest of the clan. my den is with heatherbranch and boulderfur.

heatherbranch, a lean gray tabby she-cat, says nothing, but boulderfur tries to make small talk with me, as we were apprentices together.

nineteen

"i hate this stupid game," boulderfur hisses. "all this fuss, and for gorsestar's entertainment!"

"i hate it, too," i tell him.

twenty

"find some fun in it, then," heatherbranch growls suddenly. "that's the least we can do. enjoy what's likely the last few days of your life."

twenty-one

"i guess. the innocents shouldn't even be a part. all they do is watch and get killed, anyways. save a few cats by taking them out," boulderfur says. i see a nervous glint in his eye. but is he an innocent, or a killer?

twenty-two

perhaps he isn't either, and is just a peaceful healer. i'm overthinking this.

twenty-three

i sigh. "i don't want to die."

"sometimes i wish i'd never been born at all. in this clan, at least," boulderfur mews.

twenty-four

i believe gorsestar separates us so we can suspect other cats, but i don't mention it.

twenty-five

we sleep. we'll be needing rest for the next round. i think long and hard about what i've learned about heatherbranch and boulderfur.

twenty-six

heatherbranch didn't seem like she'd be a killer. i know she has a rocky personality from going on patrols with her.

twenty-seven

boulderfur seemed a bit guilty about the innocents. but does that make him a killer, or an innocent?

twenty-eight

leafberry awakens us. "round two is starting. go to the hollow."

heatherbranch, boulderfur and me head over.

twenty-nine

almost everyone is there already. i can't tell who's missing, because there are only three cats there: magnoliawhisker, seedheart, and vixentail.

thirty

it turns out lilacwhisker and coyotecry were the ones missing. when they show up, everyone closes their eyes.

"killers, awaken," leafberry calls.

i hear gorsestar chuckle from behind us, and i realize i'd almost forgotten he was spectating.

thirty-one

"choose who you would like to kill."

never have seven words haunted me so much in my entire life.

thirty-two

"okay. the victim has been decided. healers, wake up."

more silence.

thirty-three

"choose who you would heal, if one was at death's door."

...

thirty-four

"the victim has been saved. healers, return to sleep. finder, awaken."

who do I pick? i open my eyes and glance around.

thirty-five

i flatten my ears and point to boulderfur.

thirty-six

leafberry nods. "finder, return to sleep."

i shut my eyes.

thirty-seven

i open my eyes again. everyone is awake.

"boulderfur has been accused of treason. does any cat agree?"

"i do," magnoliawhisker mutters.

thirty-eight

"i do not," vixentail growls.

"i do not, either," seedheart meows quickly.

"boulderfur will not remain in the game. his conviction has been agreed with, so he will be killed. everyone may leave for a break. killers, remember, your victim has been saved by the healers."

boulderfur is dragged away.

thirty-nine

everyone leaves. i try to look for someone that looks suspicious. since i've already talked to heatherbranch and boulderfur, i decide to try magnoliawhisker, who had accused boulderfur.

i see the heavyset white she-cat quickly.

forty

"hey, magnoliawhisker!" i call, she turns around and smiles.

"hi, yewstep! are you- uh, enjoying the game?" she says hesitantly.

forty-one

"any reason why you accused boulderfur- not that I'm accusing you of anything- i just can't think of anything else to talk about," i say awkwardly.

"there isn't a reason, really. my strategy is basically to do anything to get the blame off of yourself," she murmurs. "i love boulderfur. he's a great clanmate. but we aren't clanmates anymore. now we're simply acquaintances, nothing more."

forty-two

i nod. magnoliawhisker pads away to talk to seedheart. "nice talking to you, yewstep!" she calls behind her shoulder.

leafberry calls us back again. "round two is over," he says. "boulderfur has been killed. two rounds remain. there are three killers left, one healer left, one finder left, and three innocents."

forty-three

we are called into dens again. this time, i'm paired with seedheart and lilactail.

lilactail smiles at me when I enter, but seedheart looks angry.

"i hate this," he growls.

forty-four

"i do, too," lilactail meows. "i hope it ends soon."

seedheart bares his teeth at her. "i hate this clan, and this game, and everyone playing!"

forty-five

i growl at seedheart. "leave her alone. what did she ever do to you?"

forty-six

"why is it any of your business?"

forty-seven

"just stop!" i snap. "keep your mouth shut and go to sleep."

seedheart growls at me, but he curls up into a ball and soon, his breathing deepens.

forty-eight

"i'm sorry about him," lilactail whispers. "he's always so mean."

then it hits me: seedheart is lilactail's son.

forty-nine

"that's okay. not everyone is perfect," i murmur. lilactail nods in the darkness. then she curls up and falls asleep.

fifty

i fall asleep shortly after.

fifty-one

the next morning, leafberry calls us back again. i sigh as i walk through piles of leaves, the greenleaf sun beating down on my back.

"everyone, go to sleep," leafberry sighs. gorsestar's presence haunts every cat in the hollow.

fifty-two

"killers, awaken."

fifty-three

i squeeze my eyes shut even harder as leafberry asks, "which *two* cats would you like to kill?"

the increasing amount of cats being killed was probably gorsestar's idea.

fifty-four

"okay. killers, go back to sleep. healers, awaken."

there's only one healer left, but I don't say anything.

"which cat would you heal?"

fifty-five

"okay. one of the victims was saved. healers, return to sleep. finder, awaken."

i open my eyes.

"what cats do you accuse of treason?"

i blink in surprise. two cats?

fifty-six

without hesitation, i point my tail to seedheart. after a few moments of thinking, i nod at heatherbranch, who is "sleeping" next to me.

fifty-seven

"the finder has made their choice. everyone, wake up."

i blink and look around, trying to pretend that we aren't playing a sick game.

fifty-eight

"seedheart and heatherbranch have been accused of treason."

the tabby tom's eyes widen and he glares around at everyone. lilactail glances down sadly.

heatherbranch's face doesn't change.

fifty-nine

"does any cat second those thoughts?"

"i don't think it was heatherbranch," vixentail speaks up. i haven't heard her speak at all. "i think it's magnoliawhisker."

the white she-cat's green eyes widen.

sixty

"i think it was magnoliawhisker, too," seedheart growls.

"i think it was you, seedheart!" magnoliawhisker snaps.

"since both of the matters have been backed up, both will be executed," gorsestar meows suddenly.

sixty-one

i can't say anything, if i want to stay alive. i watch as magnoliawhisker is dragged away by gorsestar. a sickening crunch is heard, and the gladeclan leader returns for seedheart.

sixty-two

not many cats are left. heatherbranch, who was miraculously saved, coyotecry, a cat who has said nothing during the whole game, myself, lilactail, who just witnessed her son murdered, and vixentail, who has also been fairly quiet.

sixty-three

"everyone can leave as the killers take their victim."

sixty-four

we leave. everyone scatters in fear. i have no doubt i'm the one that will die.

suddenly, lilactail screams from afar.

sixty-five

i sit in silence.

sixty-six

leafberry tries to call out for me, but i can't move.

sixty-seven

everyone is dying. blood spatters my vision and i fall over.

sixty-eight

…

sixty-nine

i hear a voice suddenly.

seventy

"what happened to him?"

seventy-one

hareclaw is standing in from of me.

seventy-two

and magnoliawhisker.

seventy-three

and boulderfur, and fishfoot.

seventy-four

they are standing in front of a beautiful night sky.

seventy-five

"will he be alright?"

seventy-six

suddenly, i am whirled back into reality.

seventy-seven

gorsestar and leafberry are standing over me. i look around. "what happened to me?"

seventy-eight

"you passed out," leafberry murmurs. "after lilactail was killed."

seventy-nine

"oh."

eighty

"can you still play?" gorsestar demands.

"i think so."

eighty-one

"give him two days of rest," leafberry insists.

"fine!" gorsestar growls, leaving.

eighty-two

i sleep through both days.

eighty-three

"killers, awaken. this is your final round of play, the round that decided who will win, the killers, or the innocents. there are two killers, and two innocents left."

i squeeze my eyes shut, something i am so used to doing by now.

eighty-four

magnoliawhisker was a killer.

"choose the cat you'd like to kill."

eighty-five

the silence drags on for a long time. "okay," leafberry says. "go back to sleep. healer, awaken."

more silence.

eighty-six

"choose who you would like to save."

even more silence.

then, "the victim has been saved."

eighty-seven

"okay. return to sleep. finder, awaken."

i open my eyes to look at everyone. vixentail is next to me, and next to her, coyotecry. next to him, and on the other side of me, is heatherbranch.

eighty-eight

"choose who you would like to accuse," leafberry says to me.

after a long, long thought, i point to coyotecry, a cat i've never really talked to.

eighty-nine

"everyone, wake up."

ninety

"coyotecry has been accused of murder."

the scruffy tom scrunched his nose. "nonsense."

ninety-one

"i disagree," heatherbranch says. "yewstep looks guilty."

i raise an eyebrow.

ninety-two

"i think it was vixentail," coyotecry growls slowly. the ginger she-cat's eyes widen in fear.

"n-no! it wasn't me! it was you, coyotecry," vixentail whimpers.

ninety-three

"any cat second vixentail?" leafberry asks.

"i do," heatherbranch growls.

at that moment, as gorsestar pulls vixentail away, i realize who the killers really are.

ninety-four

all of us.

ninety-five

it all comes to me then, in a flow of craziness.

ninety-six

the killers were magnoliawhisker, heatherbranch, and coyotecry.

ninety-seven

the healers were harepelt and vixentail.

ninety-eight

the innocents were everyone else- boulderfur, seedheart, lilactail, and fishfoot.

ninety-nine

and as leafberry dismisses us, once and for all, i leave camp with a heavier heart than ever before.

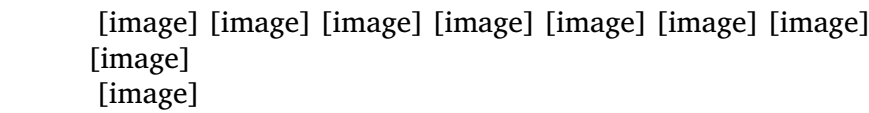
the killers have won, but i don't really care.

one hundred

i'm a killer just as much as heatherbranch and coyotecry, and even magnoliawhisker.

i walk home, desperate to get away from reality.

character aesthetics



all aesthetics are 2x2

yewstep

heatherbranch

vixentail

seedheart

fishfoot

boulderfur

magnoliawhisker

coyotecry

hareclaw

10k trivia

since this story recently hit 10k, i have decided to put out some trivia!

• in round two, yewstep was the one that was accused, but he was saved by vixentail, who had a crush on him

• heatherbranch and coyotecry are in love with each other :0

• magnoliawhisker is asexual & my favorite character from this story

• yewstep got PTSD from this "game", and whenever he sees gorsestar, he either gets very dizzy to the point where he almost blacks out, or throws up. because of this he often hunts alone or stays in the warriors' den. he often has flashbacks to the game and they put a huge impact on his life

• yewstep does have 2 siblings, lionpelt and minktooth. they were mentioned in early chapters. lionpelt is black like yewstep, with a few white patches and amber eyes. minktooth is all white with a black patch on his back and he also has amber eyes.

• not many descriptions for these characters were provided, so let me describe them for you :)

- yewstep is all black with golden eyes. he is very small and has a thin frame.

- magnoliawhisker is a fluffy, white, heavyset she-cat with golden eyes. she has tufted ears and really long claws.

- heatherbranch is a fawn tabby she-cat with dark green eyes. she is very tall and has a super long tail.

- coyotecry is a pale brown tom with silvery-gray eyes. he is short and has a bulky chest.

- fishfoot is a silver tabby tom with white paws and orange eyes. he is average size but has a fluffy mane around his neck.

- vixentail is a skinny ginger tabby she-cat with a thick pelt. her eyes are yellow and she has a really fluffy tail.

- hareclaw is a fawn tabby tom with white patches and golden eyes. he is very small.

- lilactail is a beautiful pale gray tabby she-cat with amber eyes. she has a short tail and slick fur.

- seedheart is a gray tabby tom with yellow eyes and a short tail.

- boulderfoot is a giant gray tom with copper eyes. he has a thin pelt and big paws.